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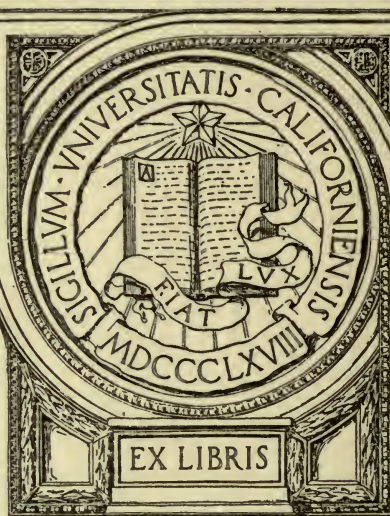
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# IN THE NAME OF TIME

ALL THINGS THE LONG AND COUNTLESS LAPSE OF TIME  
BRINGS FORTH, DISPLAYS, THEN HIDES ONCE MORE IN GLOOM.  
NOUGHT IS TOO STRANGE TO LOOK FOR ; BUT THE EVENT  
MAY MOCK THE STERNEST OATH, THE FIRMEST WILL.

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IN THE NAME OF TIME

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UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

IN THE  
NAME OF TIME  
A  
TRAGEDY

BY  
MICHAEL  
FIELD

THE POETRY BOOKSHOP  
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LONDON W.C.  
MCMXIX

TO THE  
MEMBERS OF THE

AMT. 11  
OF THE

1875-1876

Eng. Alvarado

UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA  
IN THE NAME OF TIME  
A TRAGEDY

"IN THE NAME OF TIME."—*The Winter's Tale*, iv, 1,  
*chorus*.

ἅπανθ' ὁ μακρὸς κἀναρίθμητος χρόνος  
φύει τ' ἄδηλα καὶ φανέντα κρύπτεται.  
κοῦκ ἔστ' ἄελπτον οὐδέν, ἀλλ' ἀλίσκεται  
χῶ δεινὸς ὄρκος χαί περισκελεῖς φρένες.

*Sophocles—Ajax 646.*

*Quoted from R. C. Trevelyan's Translation on the Cover.*

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F



# PERSONS

CHILPERIC	. . .	<i>King of the Franks.</i>
CARLOMAN	} . . . {	<i>Sons of Charles Martel,</i>
PEPIN		<i>Consuls and Mayors of the Palace.</i>
MARCOMIR	. . .	<i>A Frankish Count.</i>
RACHIS	. . .	<i>King of the Lombards.</i>
ASTOLPH	. . .	<i>His brother.</i>
ZACHARIAS	. . .	<i>The Pope.</i>
DAMIANI	. . .	<i>An Italian Bishop.</i>
BONIFACE	. . .	<i>A Missionary Saint.</i>
GENEVIVA	. . .	<i>Wife to Carloman.</i>

*Cardinals, Nobles, Monks, Servants.*

TO THE  
LIBRARY OF  
CALIFORNIA

# IN THE NAME OF TIME

## A TRAGEDY

### ACT I.

SCENE : *Paris. A Hall in the Royal Palace.*

CARLOMAN *is pacing backward and forward : he pauses by a crucifix set up at the further end of the hall.*

CARLOMAN.

*Thou sayest truly that I am—a King*  
He said Who laid His life down on the Cross :  
So will I be, a King. I will possess  
The great reality. I war and govern,  
I can strike hard as Charles the Hammerer ;  
Men say I have my father's qualities,  
And in the brief months of my sovereignty  
The infidel has recognised my blood :  
But this is nothing ! Phantom-Emperors  
Have made the throne phantasmal. I have felt  
In Zacharias, the great Pope, a force  
That spreads like spring across the world. No more  
Will I be petty marshal to a crew  
That hack and murder, while the royal faces  
Of wandering martyrs scintillate and thrill.  
There is a glorious Betterness at work  
Amid the highways and the solitudes ;  
I would be with it—in obscurity,  
No matter !—with the river as it shapes  
Its cisterns in the hills or where the wind  
First draws its silver volumes to a voice :  
Behind, at the beginning, from within :  
A cry, a pang—what shall respond to it,



Who help me ? I have fiery thoughts of God,  
I would attempt Him. In the wilderness  
Maybe He will unbosom.

[*Enter a SERVANT.*]

SERVANT.

The Archbishop  
Of Mentz would see you.

CARLOMAN.

Blessèd Boniface !  
He brings me my enfranchisement.  
[*As BONIFACE enters the SERVANT withdraws.*]

Great Angel,  
My spirit leaps within me to be born,  
Beholding you.

BONIFACE.

My son, the Holy Father  
Receives you joyously.

CARLOMAN.

[*kissing BONIFACE*] To go to God  
Living, unscathed, to give Him everything  
One has, to pour one's soul into His lap,  
To let Him play upon one as the wind,  
To feel His alternations . . . !

BONIFACE.

Carloman,  
Your childlike transport shall be surely blessed :  
Yet in the convent there are bitter hours  
Of exile from God's presence, penances—

CARLOMAN.

But will they choke my solitude with prayers ?

BONIFACE.

The holy brethren chant in unison

For hours within the chapel ; there is buzz  
About the cloister like a hive of bees.

CARLOMAN.

There have been hermits ! Might I live alone,  
I could breathe unrepiningly the while  
It pleased God to keep silence. I would tame  
Some wistful, kingly beast to roam with me,  
And we would wait His pleasure. Boniface,  
Oh, tell me of His coming ! It is plain  
He has been with you—You became His friend ?

BONIFACE.

His servant rather.

CARLOMAN.

That I cannot be ;  
I am a Knight free-born ; I come as those  
Great nobles of the East, and all my service  
Is adoration. You may have some converts,  
Brute-tribes, who give allegiance to His name,  
As those who do not speak the Emperor's tongue  
May rank his subjects. I am not of these.

BONIFACE.

Thou speakest truth, my son ; there are some souls  
Loved of the Lord as Paul in Araby  
With whom one must not meddle. In good time  
You will exalt the Church ; meanwhile your brother  
Who has a tighter grip of circumstance  
Than you—

CARLOMAN.

He is short-sighted, politic,  
External in his bent. I lead the charge  
In battle, I foresee the combinations  
Of foreign forces ; he is good at siege,  
And all the hectoring process of delay.  
He is not like my father. That great fight  
At Tours ! I feel the onslaught in my blood ;  
It never can run sluggish.

BONIFACE.

Had you seen  
King Chilperic's flower-wreathed waggon in the street !—  
You should have looked a last time on the world  
Ere you renounced it.

CARLOMAN.

Scanned the heir of Clovis  
Drawn like a senseless idol in his car !  
You judge unworthily. God bade me come  
Up higher to Him on a battlefield  
Where I was victor. It was in the night—  
I moved about among my sleeping men,  
I heard them shout for triumph in their dreams :  
It was enough !

BONIFACE.

Yes, all is vanity ;  
The pride of life, its splendour, *vanitas* !

CARLOMAN.

There is no vanity in life ; life utters  
Unsparing truth to us,—there is no line  
Or record in our body of her printing  
That stamps a falsehood. Do not so confound,  
Father, life's transience and sincerity.  
What makes the show out in the streets so vile  
Is that it blazons forth the lie that youth,  
Kingship and power are ineffectual.  
A show of death where life should radiate  
Is vanity. And if I now fling off  
The honourable titles of my state,  
Consul and Patriarch, it is not because  
I have not nobly borne them ; by my sword  
The Church has been defended, and the corn  
That bows in shocks about your monasteries  
Bows down above the battlefields I won.  
You misconceive.

BONIFACE.

A sweep of piety  
Beyond my censure ! [*half-aside*] Will he thrive at Rome ?

CARLOMAN.

Why should you look so fearful ? I have chosen  
The path of life, choosing to be a monk,  
And I have wisely chosen.

BONIFACE.

Ah, beloved !

CARLOMAN.

Now I must face my brother. Would he come  
By chance ! I dare not crave a conference.  
I am arrested at the lips if ever  
We speak of anything beyond affairs.  
He will not understand—at least to-day,  
When fresh from the procession of that cursed  
Do-nothing Chilperic.

BONIFACE.

Set your purpose forth  
At once, and let him freely misconceive :  
You must not cloud for that.

CARLOMAN.

These mighty thoughts,  
Mingled with God, how put them to the shame  
Of the world's censure ! What you call my soul  
Flees as a shy girl that escapes pursuit.

BONIFACE.

Take your shame meekly. Do not let your eyes  
Grow wild and hostile !

[BONIFACE, who has seen PEPIN approaching, withdraws to the back of the hall, stands before the Crucifix in mute prayer, and then passes out, looking back at the brothers. PEPIN is a short, stout man, with florid complexion and much vehemence of manner. He wipes the perspiration from his face and addresses CARLOMAN without looking at him.]

PEPIN.

Woden, what a sight !  
 This Chilperic is an idol that the people  
 No longer worship as his car rolls on.  
 Contempt, indifference ! A few more months  
 Will rid us of the calf. We pull together  
 In right good part, fraternal, taking pride  
 Each in the other's excellence : ere long  
 The Pope will pour his oil upon our heads  
 To nourish our short curls.

CARLOMAN.

He has the power  
 Of making Kings ?

PEPIN.

Liutbrand the Lombard winced  
 Before him and resigned the Exarchite :  
 And he who can impoverish may endow.

CARLOMAN.

[*with a sudden movement*]  
 Pepin, we have not looked upon the face  
 Of Zacharias : I am bound for Rome.

PEPIN.

A pilgrimage ? Stay where you are ! Tut, tut !  
 Wait till he seek us. Frankland is his hope  
 Against the Lombard : when he seeks us then  
 We twain will offer him our dutiful,  
 Strong swords, and keep St. Peter's realm intact ;  
 While, in return, that gracious influence,  
 That something that we lack to give our strength  
 Supremacy, shall be poured down on us.

CARLOMAN.

*Something we lack !* I dream of a possession—  
 Pepin, the world if I became a monk  
 Would recognise that I lay down my rights,  
 None wrests them from me.



PEPIN.

Are you clean gone mad !  
Become a monk, you, Consul, Patriarch !  
Our mother had been Christian scarce a year  
Before your birth, and haply took the priest  
Too much into her privacy. By Thor—

CARLOMAN.

[*taking him by the throat*]  
No, but by God Incarnate, you shall swear  
You own me son of Christendom's great guard  
Ere you again draw unimperilled breath !  
I, Carloman, your elder, the first-born  
Of Charles Martel, of my own choice renounce  
My portion in his honours. Own my birthright !

PEPIN.

Plague take you !

CARLOMAN.

Own it !

PEPIN.

Give a fellow breath,

Don't . . .  
You have your father's temper, that's the test !  
I loved you as a boy and set my teeth  
Against a rare, sweet craziness that takes you  
In certain moods—you need a keeper then :  
You need one now. Hold fast your birthright, man ;  
Don't trust me with temptation. Geneviva  
Will relish this new folly less than I—  
Chuck her beneath the chin and threaten her  
With your design ! She is too young a widow  
For me to govern.

CARLOMAN.

[*apart*] Deaf down to the soul !

PEPIN.

That flush across your forehead like a scar  
At mention of your wife ! Her lovers !—Think  
If you withdrew protection . . .

CARLOMAN.

Purity,

In woman the ideal and the dream,  
Has its firm seat amid the altitudes  
Of manhood's nature—There alone are seats  
Of holy contemplation, sexless thoughts,  
Love that in God finds goal, a loneliness  
That truth, not sympathy, can cure. 'Tis vain  
The hope that woman, made to minister  
To momentary passion, can provide  
Solace and inspiration to her mate.  
She breeds no hope ; she cannot offer us  
A clime for our ideals and our dreams,  
Or plant a footstep soft as memory's  
Across futurity's unimpressed sands.

PEPIN.

You speak from fact, I own.

But Boniface,

What does he say ?

CARLOMAN.

He aids me.

PEPIN.

[*slapping him on the shoulder*] Carloman,  
"Twould be cold work without you.

CARLOMAN.

But my son——.

PEPIN.

Nay, nay, no substitute ! You are my brother,  
I know the secret how to humour you,  
I weave your projects in our policy,



And now and then you marshal us the way  
Of an archangel . . . but no substitute !

CARLOMAN.

Yet love him for my sake ; give him free training  
In war and letters.

PEPIN.

Fie, fie ! Geneviva  
Will put you from this project. In the cloister  
What would you see but men who dig and pray ?—  
No royal pageants.

[*KING CHILPERIC is borne in a litter with great pomp. His golden hair sweeps over the sides of the litter ; his face is nerveless and exhausted.*]

CARLOMAN.

[*with an ironic smile*] Such as this. The King !  
Tell him I have transferred the Mayoralty  
To you, and do not taunt me any more.

PEPIN.

[*to CHILPERIC*]  
Sire, you are weary, yet we crave the grace  
Of a brief audience.

CHILPERIC.

Business ! I can brook  
No more of these distractions. Your good brother  
Relieves me of all business. I can hear  
Scarcely the people's clamour when they shout,  
And I am shy at facing them. To know  
There is a god indifferent to its whims  
Gives the world courage of its natural awe ;  
So I expose these curls ; that duty done,  
Leave me at ease, an idol in his niche.

PEPIN.

But, sire, my brother has persuaded me,

If you consent, to take on me his burthens,  
His duties and his honours ; being summoned,  
He holds, by God to a monastic life.

CHILPERIC.

[*with passing animation*]

This interests us. After so brief a term  
Of dignity ! But I applaud his sense :  
The convent is a place for peace of mind ;  
One has no interruption, one may watch  
The gold-fish in the fountain half a day,  
If so one will ; and, though the prayers are long,  
One grows accustomed to them as to meals  
And looks for their recurrence.

[*suspiciously*] But, my Consul,  
With you it cannot be the luxury  
Of doing nothing that attracts. For us  
It is the happy and predestined lot ;  
But for an untamed youth whose pleasures still  
Are running in the current of his blood,  
Such choice is of ill-omen.

CARLOMAN.

Courage, sire,  
Is constant industry for happiness.  
When I become a monk——

CHILPERIC.

Nay, no confession,  
No putting reasons to your Overlord.  
[*to his nobles*]  
You need not shake your spears so stormily,  
We leave you a stout leader for your wars,  
[*to CARLOMAN*] And you, your liberty. What use of it  
You make is of no moment to the world,  
And does not raise my curiosity,  
Who for myself have found in meat and drink,  
In sleep and long, long abstinence from care  
The pleasure proper to me. Pepin, come !

[*Exeunt CHILPERIC, PEPIN and the Frankish Nobles.*]

CARLOMAN.

He has no sight of God, is imbecile  
And dropping into clay. I should not let  
This show dishearten me ; but I have suffered  
A vulgar tongue to tell what from my lips  
Alone is truth—that as the hidden spring,  
Restless at touch of the diviner's rod  
Is dragged through to the surface by his spells,  
I am discovered and borne upward, made  
The answer to some perilous appeal :  
And for my folly I must be dismissed  
By a mere dotard with a passing sigh  
Of envy, who forego the battlefield,  
The Council-chamber, the sweet clang of arms  
For just a pricking wonder at my heart,  
A knowledge I would give to secrecy  
Plunging it headlong in the ear of God.  
Oh for the cloister ! I will make escape  
At once, in silence, without taking leave :  
My joy is in the consciousness that Time  
Will never draw me back to any wish  
To any fondness I am flinging off. . . .

[Enter GENEVIVA.]

My wife !

Is Geneviva come to me ?

GENEVIVA.

Now the dull monk has left you. Rouse your head !  
I have been taking thought how best to trim  
My beauty for you. Boniface was slow  
In giving counsel ; slowly I took up,  
Handled and dropt my jewels. Of a sudden,  
When Pepin's voice was heard upon the stair,  
I laid these blossoms in a ruddy knot  
Thus hasty on my bosom. Come to me.  
My lord, you owe me many hours of love,  
So many hours I have been beautiful  
In vain. You do not see me when I sing,  
You miss the marks of music in my face,

You do not love the hunt, and you have never  
Ridden beside me in the morning light.  
You see me but as now when I am vexed  
And haughty for caresses.

CARLOMAN.

[*after a pause*]  
You are a Christian ?

Geneviva,

GENEVIVA.

Dear my lord, you speak  
As if I were laid sick.

CARLOMAN.

You were baptised ?

GENEVIVA.

Assuredly, but the cold font has left  
No chill upon my heart. Think not of that,  
Think of our marriage-day. You leave me lonely  
While Boniface enthralls you.

CARLOMAN.

[*with hesitation*]  
Have put aside their pomps and vanities . . .

Women even

GENEVIVA.

Oh, leave me, you are insupportable !  
You bring me word of kingdoms and of monks,  
And thoughts of things that have not come to pass,  
Or should be quite forgotten. We could spend  
So sweet a moment now, for you are loved,  
My Carloman—What need is there of talk  
Concerning other matters?—loved of me,  
Dreamed of when I am dreaming, when I wake  
Wept for, sighed after. I have never cared  
To listen to the minstrels, for the praise

My beauty covets most is in your eyes.  
How wild they look and solemn !

[CARLOMAN folds her in his arms quietly. Then with great effort bends over her and speaks]

CARLOMAN.

Marcomir

Is restless for a pilgrimage to Rome.  
I think we shall be starting presently :  
And afterward . . . If I am long away . . .

GENEVIVA.

[*breaking from him*]

Oh, think a little ! Can you leave this hair  
So crisp and burnished ? When the sun is bright  
Across your shield, it has no livelier flash—  
Confess, it has not ? But you come to me  
Stale, weary from your dreams and abstinence,  
And tingle my suspicion.

CARLOMAN.

If these dreams  
Were growing all the world to me !—You start,  
You turn away, you will not understand.  
The fear of hurting you has made me keep  
So distant from you lately, and my eyes  
You thought were worn with vigil and with books  
Have burnt with tears at night for many a month  
To think you have not known the tyrant-joy  
That moves a soul to change and severance,  
Except upon the day when for my sake  
You parted from your home : but by the rapture  
That made such tumult in the daughter's grief  
When she became a bride, your husband now  
Implores your comprehension.

*All thou hast,*

So the Church teaches, *family and spouse,*  
*The child thou hast begotten, thine own life*  
*Thou must abhor, if thou would'st have new days*



*Of blessing on the Earth.* I feel this law  
Is written in my very heart of hearts,  
There is such haunting freshness deep below  
The sorrow of farewell.

GENEVIVA.

[*defiantly*] My God is Love—  
The God who made a bower in Paradise,  
Who wedded Eve and Adam, who abode  
In the sweet incense of His Church to bless  
My marriage.

[CARLOMAN *stretches out his hand to support her.*]

Have no fear that I shall fall,  
I cannot swoon while I remember it—  
How in the songful hush a restless hand  
Grew tight about my fingers, and a vow  
Thrilled all the girl in me to womanhood,  
And stung the future lying at my heart  
To joy and frankness. That was years ago . . .

[*She breaks into a bitter laugh*]

O Carloman, you know not what you do,  
You know not what I am, nor what a blank  
Of mercy there is in you !

CARLOMAN.

Were I dead,  
You would not be so violent : in a trance  
Of resignation you would think of me,  
With tears, not gasping laughter.

GENEVIVA.

[ *pacing the room excitedly*] *Pilgrimage !*  
Did you say, pilgrimage ? To think of you  
Growing each day more cramped about the mouth,  
More full of resolution in the eyes. —  
What shall I do ? *Pray for you*—but the dead,  
You have just told me, should be left unmourned,  
Forgotten as last summer's autumn-leaves.  
[*facing him coldly*] My lord, I am no reliquary-urn ;  
There is no widow in me.

*[with still greater change of manner]* If you leave  
Your Kingdom, there are certain things to do  
Before you start. There is that Gothic King,  
The captive Hermann—you must break his chains.

CARLOMAN.

Hermann is dead. Count Marcomir reports  
Last night he found him lifeless.

GENEVIVA.

*[gasping]* Late last night ?  
Marcomir !—Take your fingers from my sleeve ;  
But summon Marcomir, and if again  
There is intelligence to break to me  
Likely to hurt, give him the charge of it.

CARLOMAN.

No, Geneviva. I have little speech ;  
But when the secret crept into my soul  
I loved you, it was not to Marcomir  
I spoke : and if another secret now  
Is breaking through my nature, do not think  
That he will be the spokesman.

*[noticing her agitation]* Hermann died  
I think by his own hand ; he courted death.  
What can a man prize in captivity ?

*[as GENEVIVA grows more agitated]*  
There ! I will speak no more of him. Your maids—  
*[turning to summon her attendants]*.

GENEVIVA.

Weave the great arras. They have no concern  
With me, except in silence to array.  
You thought I cared to gossip with my maids !  
But summon Marcomir.

*[She looks after CARLOMAN, who walks out, stroking his chin].*

To think he dared  
To lean above me with those burning eyes



Unconscious what they glassed. I did not learn  
 From him the magic that was born in me,  
 I learnt it when great Hermann passed in chains,  
 And he is dead. I promised I would go  
 To-day and visit him. How could he die ?

[MARCOMIR *enters.*]

Why, you are deadly pale !

[*She recoils, and says in a faint voice*]

It is the hour

Fixed for our visit.

MARCOMIR.

But the man is dead.

GENEVIVA.

What does he look like now ? Is he so changed  
 I must not see him ?

MARCOMIR.

Death is not a fact  
 To touch with simile. What looks he like ?  
 All men in moonlight mind one of the moon,  
 All dead men look like death.

GENEVIVA.

He lies in chains ?

Are the brows restful ?

MARCOMIR.

Had you been a man  
 You would have asked me how he came to die,  
 No more !

GENEVIVA.

I had forgotten . . . then he perished  
 As Carloman reports ?  
 [MARCOMIR *turns away.*] You cannot bear  
 That I should mourn him ?

MARCOMIR.

*[facing her again]* Oh, a lifetime, if  
It please you ! I am going to a place  
Where love is held of little consequence.

GENEVIVA.

Then you are bound for hell.

MARCOMIR.

*[between his teeth]* But you are safe !

GENEVIVA.

Keep me recluse from love, as men from war,  
You spoil my faculties. Where will you go ?

MARCOMIR.

To any coast you have not trod, wherever  
The flowers are different from the flowers you wear,  
To some Italian convent. Geneviva,  
I am not framed to see you minister  
To other men ; but when long years are passed,  
It may be in a fresco, I shall find  
Some figure of a lady breaking bread  
To mendicants, and kneel and pray to her  
That she may bless me also : but till then . . .

*[covering his eyes]*

O God, you shall not tempt me, though I feel  
Just how your hair burns in a fiery wreath  
Above your brow, and how your eyes are soft  
With blue, and deeper blue, as through the hills  
The valley stretches azure to the close.  
You shall not tempt me, though I almost hear  
Your bosom taking record of your breath,  
And I could sit and watch that tide of life  
Rising and falling through the lovely curves,  
Till I was lost in ecstasy.

GENEVIVA.

Oh, hush !

But then you love me. It was in a fit . . . ?

MARCOMIR.

Of devilish malice.

GENEVIVA.

In a jealous fit ?

You shall remain.

*[She goes up to him : he takes her hands in his, kisses them coldly, and puts them away.]*

MARCOMIR.

I did not answer you—

His face was drawn.

GENEVIVA.

And I had given you charge

Of the great restive soldier.

MARCOMIR.

True, I swerved ;

I have confessed my sin, and now must bear

The settling of my spirit on the Cross.

GENEVIVA.

So many favours !

MARCOMIR.

But you kissed his brows—

What need was there of that ?

GENEVIVA.

You love me then,

You love me ! Would you murder him again

If I again should touch him with my breath ?

MARCOMIR.

Again, again.

GENEVIVA.

And Carloman complains

I am indifferent to him !

MARCOMIR.

He forgets ;

But, Geneviva, if a thousand years  
Broke over me, when Time had cleared his storms  
I should look up and know your face by heart.

GENEVIVA.

Then stay, stay, stay with me !

Have you once thought  
Through the long years how it will fare with me—  
Nothing to watch except the sullen waste  
Of my own beauty ? Marcomir, I hold  
If there be judgment it shall be required  
Of women what delight their golden hair  
Has yielded—have they put its wealth to use,  
Or suffered it to lie by unenjoyed ?  
I rather would die spendthrift, nothing left  
Of my rich heritage, save memory  
Of the wild, passing pleasure it conferred  
Than keep it untransmuted. And you choose  
To take from me the only eyes that care  
To mirror mine ! I have so often thought  
That some day I shall drown myself : the water  
Reflects me with desire.

MARCOMIR.

*[bitterly, as he turns away]* A soul so wide  
In innocence, so regal, on the day  
He wedded, he appointed me your squire !

GENEVIVA.

*[following him]*

He keeps you with him, you can read his heart,  
You know what way he travels, when his soul  
Flies homeward. Tell me—'tis the only knowledge  
I crave for in the world—does Carloman  
Still hold me in affection ? I beseech,  
Tell me the truth. He loves you ——

MARCOMIR.

Yes, he loves,

He does not use me for his purposes.

[*perceiving* PEPIN]

Not Carloman—his brother on the stair

Laughs at your light behaviour. So you lose

One last poor opportunity.

[*Re-enter* PEPIN.]

PEPIN.

Good even.

Well, my fair sister, you have heard the news,

Wept [*glancing at* MARCOMIR]

and found consolation.

But to think

The son of Charles Martel should be a monk !

GENEVIVA.

A monk !—a pilgrim ?

PEPIN.

No, a cloistered monk.

MARCOMIR.

What is his crime ?

PEPIN.

Oh, no impiety ;

A crazy fit : he must get near to God,

So puts away all intercourse with man :

And while I rule he thinks to thrill the world

With some convulsive movement from his prayers.

Ha, ha ! But you shall queen it as before.

GENEVIVA.

Go fetch my husband and remain without,

For he alone can speak to me of this.

[*Exit* PEPIN.]

[*turning to* MARCOMIR]

You are a murderer : this act of yours

Will leave me very lonely.



MARCOMIR.

I repent.

GENEVIVA.

There is no sin like that of looking back  
When one has sinned. Whatever one attempts  
If perfected in patience brings reward.  
My Carloman will prosper : his whole heart  
Is gone away from me.

Why there he is,  
Passing in zealous talk with Boniface.

[CARLOMAN and BONIFACE cross from right to left at the  
back of the hall. GENEVIVA intercepts them.]

Farewell !

CARLOMAN.

[*arrested*] O Geneviva !

GENEVIVA.

Not my name,  
Never my name again. Say, holy father—  
They take new titles who renounce the world ?

CARLOMAN.

[*with flushing eagerness*]

Then you too will renounce it ? oh, the joy !  
There is a strange new passion in your eyes.  
Speak to me . . . but you cannot ! I could take  
No leave of you in your fierce, worldly mood ;  
Now all is changed.

GENEVIVA.

Yes, all. How long ago  
It seems since we were married !

CARLOMAN.

Think the day  
Is yet to come, the joy is all before.  
[*taking her face between his hands*]

O Boniface, this is no temptress' face !  
 God has been with her, and she starts as I  
 Free in the great endeavour.

BONIFACE.

Do you choose,  
 Lady, a mere retreat among the nuns,  
 Or, like your husband, do you break all ties  
 That bind you to the earth ?

GENEVIVA.

They all are broken :  
 Except . . . oh, I forgot ! I have a son.

CARLOMAN.

[*nervously*]  
 Pepin will guard him.

GENEVIVA.

Are you dreaming still ?  
 Fool, fool ! I tell you Pepin shall decide  
 What robes I wear, and haply suffer me  
 Sometimes at entertainments to look on,  
 And see young Charlemagne praised. But for my child  
 He shall remain with me.

[*Re-enter PEPIN*]. All is confirmed.  
 I shall not quit the world. How easily  
 A man is duped with God upon the brain !  
 I shall continue in my womanhood,  
 Giving, receiving pleasure.

I have heard  
 So much and suddenly ; for Marcomir  
 Is to become a monk.  
 [*to CARLOMAN*] Give him no welcome.

He takes the cowl a penitent ; he is not,  
 Like you, a white-souled wayfarer.

[*to PEPIN*] How strange  
 That we must pair together, you and I ;  
 I know so little of your tastes and now  
 I must be often in your company.



MARCOMIR.

My lord, speak to her.

PEPIN.

Come, an end to this !

Brother, if you are wise you will not leave  
This woman in the world. Convents are made  
To tame the pride of such and keep them cool.

CARLOMAN.

O Geneviva, for my sake, and yet . . .  
Not so, beloved.

*[He turns away and covers his face.]*

GENEVIVA.

Marcomir, farewell !

You will be monks together. When my husband  
Forgets me, you must bring me to his thoughts.  
Recall that day we hunted and you fell ;  
I stayed to tend you ; but the whole live day  
My voice rang through the woods for Carloman  
Until I wearied you ; he was not found ;  
But you remember how I cried for him.

MARCOMIR.

Consul, have pity on her. I am free,  
But she has need of love.

GENEVIVA.

O insolence !—

The virginal chill heart !—No intercession !

*[to CARLOMAN]*

Our marriage is dissolved. How great a stranger  
You have become to me ! I should grow mad  
To breathe by you another single hour.

*[to BONIFACE]*

And you, old man, who stand with such meek eyes,  
Though you have robbed me of my name of wife,  
And made my boy an orphan—go your way !

I cannot curse you, but I prophesy :  
 Dishonour motherhood, plant virgin homes,  
 Give to religion the sole charge of love,  
 And you will rear up lust of such an ice  
 As Death himself will shiver at.

[to PEPIN]

Lead on !

Now there is hope you may become a King,  
 There should be some high festival to keep  
 To-night in everlasting memory.  
 Lead me away.

PEPIN.

Brother, in all—good luck !  
 And may the Convent's fare be angels' food.  
 Your wife's tears soon will dry.

[*Exeunt PEPIN and GENEVIVA.*]

CARLOMAN.

The thing to do  
 Is simply just the sole thing to be done.  
 There should have been no tears, no taking leave ;  
 A freeman can do anything he will.

MARCOMIR.

Take me along with you.

CARLOMAN.

Ah where—to God ?  
 Why would you come with me ?

MARCOMIR.

You must not ask.  
 Some rival slain in haste—the ebbing back  
 Of hatred that has left the face exposed  
 Of a dead foe I spared not. I have struck  
 On something in my nature that is foul,  
 That goes on breeding in me, that will taint  
 My fellows : I must purify my heart  
 With lonely fasting and continual prayers.  
 My hope is all in Time : though Time defaces

So much of what is fair, it dims the spots :  
I who am just a murderer to myself,  
Who close my eyes upon a sleeping guilt  
And waking, answer to the bloody name,  
Have some faint courage that a transformation  
Will come . . .

CARLOMAN.

Oh, do not put your trust in Time ;  
Put on at once *forever*, leap to God !  
Have done with age and death and faltering friends,  
Assailing circumstance, the change of front,  
That one is always meeting in oneself,  
The plans, the vacillations—let them go !  
And you will put on immortality  
As simply as a vesture.

MARCOMIR.

And you think  
Of starting—when ?

CARLOMAN.

Now : we are on the road.

## ACT II

SCENE : *An audience-chamber in the old Lateran Palace, Rome.*

[*Enter ZACHARIAS and DAMIANI.*]

DAMIANI.

And so the Lombard yielded . . . ?

ZACHARIAS.

Not to me,  
But to my God. Each man of woman born  
Is fashioned in God's outer image : few  
Are so compact of Him they feel His strength  
Within their body as a force that pushes  
Its way and dissipates the hollow crowd  
Of godless men ; but from my youth I prayed  
I might be like Him in my inward parts  
As in my form of dust : and there was nothing  
That stood against me. It was simple joy  
To meet the opposition of my foes,  
To meet triumphant wickedness, to meet  
The deadliest torpor ; for they had an end  
As night and mist are ended by the sun.

DAMIANI.

You act on a dread thought.

ZACHARIAS.

The thought conceived,  
Life has no terrors. It is emptiness  
Alone that makes us timid and inert :  
Fill up the void, we go from strength to strength  
In our possession. When I worship God,  
The pyx upon the altar where He dwells  
Has not a closer hold on Him than I.

DAMIANI.

No wonder that men fear you in their hearts,  
And yield when you approach them !

ZACHARIAS.

But you questioned  
About my recent journey to the hills,  
That I might save Perugia from the craft  
Of Rachis, the vile Lombard King. I went  
And faced him . . . all his treachery gave way,  
The town was mine again ; and more than this,  
All his ambition vanished—at my feet  
He promised to renounce the world itself,—  
Like Carloman, the Consul of the Franks,  
Who left his wife, his honours and his home  
To dwell on Mount Soracte.

DAMIANI.

Carloman—

His fame spreads every day.

ZACHARIAS.

I felt a warmth  
Myself to see the man, and when he came  
A welcome rushed out from my soul, such life  
Tempered the resolution of his face.  
God dwelt in him—yet fitfully it seemed,  
A fever in his blood, not constant health,  
Unalterable habit, as with those  
To whom God is the same now, yesterday,  
And always. As I blessed him I became  
Disquieted—his long hands were never still.  
He needed discipline, such changeless hours  
As make the spirit stable. Now he seeks  
Another meeting, so this letter says,  
To ask me some petition for himself,  
And for his friend.

DAMIANI.

He leaves a noble brother,



Religious and undaunted, in his place,  
Pepin the Mayor.

ZACHARIAS.

On whom I build my trust.  
I would that Rachis left upon his throne  
A brother who could stand by Carloman's :  
But Astolph has a rebel's countenance,  
The only eyes that never bent to mine.  
He looked upon me as a robber might  
Who saw in God's own altar but a setting  
To jewels that he coveted. And when  
Rachis knelt down and vowed to leave the world,  
And there was silence in the Lombard host,  
I heard a ringing laugh, and Astolph shook  
His yellow hair with joy. I never saw  
So mad a gesture—God will strike him down !

[*Enter a* CARDINAL.]

CARDINAL.

The Lombard King would see you.

ZACHARIAS.

We will receive our penitent.      Lead him in,  
[*Exit* CARDINAL.]  
This Rachis  
Shall make your Convent famous : Mount Casino  
Shall have its royal monk.

DAMIANI.

A gracious thought.

[*Enter* RACHIS *with two* CARDINALS.]

ZACHARIAS.

Welcome ! You come to Rome to take your vow.

RACHIS.

I come to ask your counsel first. My father,  
I have no trust in Astolph, he is stubborn,



Heretical, and will bewitch my people  
From all allegiance to your holy throne.  
I speak of certain danger.

ZACHARIAS.

Ah !

RACHIS.

I love you,  
I love the peaceful service of the cell,  
And each affection tears me bitterly :  
Yet for the sake of keeping my wild hordes  
Your servants, I am willing to renounce  
The pleasure of the cloister, if your wisdom  
Absolve me from my promise and restore me  
To Kingship over Astolph.

[*He watches ZACHARIAS with the utmost anxiety.*]

ZACHARIAS.

What you plead  
Is politic . . . but, stay, I rob the Church  
Of glory if I think of what is safe ;  
God can protect His own—the fiercer battle,  
The heavenlier triumph. He received your oath,  
Not I.

RACHIS.

You are His Pope, you can remit . . .  
And you would rule in peace.

ZACHARIAS.

How dare you tempt  
The Lord your God, upon whose earthly throne  
I sit ? Get from me ! One short month ago  
You were yourself blaspheming in the land,  
A heretic like Astolph and a slave  
To your own lust. Begone ! The convent walls  
Alone can save you. If you drop away  
There is no limit to the punishment

God deals to such backslider ; you become  
Perjured for all eternity.

RACHIS.

Alas,  
Is there no service that will soften God,  
Except the cloister ?

ZACHARIAS.

Fool and hypocrite,  
There is no way to Him except the path  
A man's best moment finds, and you are lost  
If you regret your vow—to break from it  
Is utterly impossible : a star  
Can no more leave the music of its course  
Than any mortal break his word to God.  
Your soul is bound for ever.

[*Enter CARLOMAN and MARCOMIR with another Cardinal.*]

Dearest son,  
I greet you with God's blessing,  
[*to MARCOMIR*] And on you  
Confer the same. How prospers Carloman ?

CARLOMAN.

Oh, well, dear father.

ZACHARIAS.

He who keeps his knees  
Is Rachis, King of Lombardy. He takes  
Like you the fearful vow to be a monk.

RACHIS.

[*to CARLOMAN*] Protect me, help me, holy Carloman ;  
Let me return with you. I am distracted . . .  
A perjured man God will destroy in hate.

CARLOMAN.

Come with me, come . . . but not to make confession,  
To tabulate your crimes ; come to the cloister,

To solitude, the simple light of God.  
 You must not dream, because your wickedness  
 Has waked you to disgust, that you are called.  
 The trouble is not betwixt God and sin ;  
 Sin does not shut God out, it is the lantern  
 Flashing across the dark void of the world—  
 Most penetrative pulses ; use the flare  
 For such poor revelation as it yields.  
 But this new life . . . you must arise and go  
 Toward it as disencumbered as of old  
 Abraham went up to Ur, all his possessions  
 Kept for him in a mystery out of sight.  
 To dream of them is faith, and to forget  
 All one has touched and handled, loved or wrought  
 Of sin or righteousness, the perfect sign  
 The new man is begotten.

RACHIS.

Pray for me,  
 If you are in God's favour. Teach me how  
 To win a better throne than I have lost,  
 Safe from my brother, a perpetual seat  
 High in the heavens.

CARLOMAN.

[*with a ringing laugh*] If that is your ambition,  
 Oh then, how clear it is that you are damned,  
 Wherever you may lodge !

RACHIS.

Ha—terrible !  
 You must not curse me ; as the meanest slave  
 I am content to cringe . . .

CARLOMAN.

And heaven detests  
 A beggar's whining. God is made for Kings,  
 Who need no favours, come to Him for nothing  
 Except Himself.

RACHIS.

But does that satisfy ?  
You who have borne the Convent many months—

ZACHARIAS.

Yes, you can now bear witness to this poor  
Mistrusting wretch that you have no regrets.  
Speak out your true experience.

CARLOMAN.

[*catching his breath*] I am sad.  
[*to ZACHARIAS*] I cannot speak with this petitioner  
Trembling beside me : give him judgment first,  
And then hear my complaint.

ZACHARIAS.

[*sternly*] No : let him hear—  
What have you against God ?

CARLOMAN.

I have not found Him.

ZACHARIAS.

You fast ? You have been diligent in prayer ?

CARLOMAN.

[*more excitedly*] I cannot pray—scarcely at Angelus—  
The sun so flares and changes . . . in the cold  
East clouds there is such witness to His strength  
Ere he lay him down : the life, the passion  
Arrest me and I weep.

ZACHARIAS.

You *cannot* pray !  
But in the cloister. . . .

CARLOMAN.

Oh, those other prayers  
That I am set, I say them when I must,

I sing within the chapel, dig and plant,  
 And eat my portion ; then there comes an hour,  
 For which my heart has saved itself all day,  
 When I can be alone—sole preparation  
 The spirit makes when she would be with God—  
 I turn from Time's small dues of speech and habit  
 To serve Eternity, the joy is coming  
 That has no moment : and a noise is made,  
 A monk approaches me, and I am summoned  
 To visitors who seek me as a marvel  
 To gaze upon. O father, when they look  
 I reel with shame.

ZACHARIAS.

What would you ? Such example  
 As yours confounds the foolish.

CARLOMAN.

Grant my prayer—  
 Our prayers, for Marcomir's are joined to mine—  
 That we may leave Soracte and retire  
 To some far convent hidden in the hills.

ZACHARIAS.

Wisely you ask the natural medicine  
 Your state requires.

Good prior Damiani,  
 The brothers Carloman and Marcomir  
 Together with King Rachis join your rule.  
 Let them obey you, leading tranquil lives.  
*[apart to DAMIANI]*  
 Firm discipline !

RACHIS.

*[from the ground]* O holy pontiff, grant  
 That I may change with Carloman—Soracte  
 For me, if you are merciful.

ZACHARIAS.

Not so.

This zealous son of ours has felt the poison  
 Of worldly visits trouble him.



MARCOMIR.

[*sharply*] Sin needs  
A tomb in which to die.

RACHIS.

Fool ! I am lost !

[*He throws himself again on the ground in despair.*]

CARLOMAN.

We thank you, father, for we bound our hearts  
And brains and bodies with the fearful oath  
To live in God, and the great Tempter—Time—  
Has thwarted us persistently with bondage  
Of interruption. Claims and trifles hinder  
Our worship of what passes not away ;  
[*vehemently*]  
And I am chafed, my father.

ZACHARIAS.

There is something  
Terribly painful in your eyes—pray much,  
And think but seldom.

[*Enter another Cardinal.*]

CARDINAL.

Saintly Boniface  
Comes from the Frankish Court.

[*He ushers BONIFACE in.*]

ZACHARIAS.

A triple blessing  
On this most reverend head. You come from Pepin  
Or Chilperic ? Here is Carloman.

BONIFACE.

Beloved,  
Why have you left Soracte ?



CARLOMAN.

Visitors

Wasted my leisure : I became a sight,  
Like some caged animal.

ZACHARIAS.

He leaves to-day

For Mount Casino.

BONIFACE.

[to CARLOMAN] You are happy ?

CARLOMAN.

Yes . . .

Oh, no, not happy ; it is different :  
Not as you feel when you have won the goal,  
But as you feel when racing.

BONIFACE.

Do you care

To ask no news of Pepin or . . . of . . . ?

CARLOMAN.

No. [*he turns away.*]

ZACHARIAS.

What is your mission, good Archbishop ?

BONIFACE.

Pepin

Sends me to ask your blessing and to pray  
That you would place upon his head the crown  
That Chilperic seems to wear, but which, in truth,  
He, Pepin, owns unworn !

ZACHARIAS.

We have considered

This matter on our knees before our God,  
And questioned what the power He lodged with us

Might in such case attempt : we have been taught  
 A glorious lesson—that as Samuel made  
 And unmade Kings, because God ruled in him,  
 So we can put away the *fainéant*,  
 Disgraceful Chilperic, and proclaim as King  
 Pepin, our doughty servant.

CARLOMAN.

[*starting*]

Pepin—King !

[*turning aside again*]

Why should this news so knock to enter—why ?  
 It seems to make me open a shut door :  
 I see the Rhone, I see my father's roof,  
 The gay French faces !—Pepin, King !

BONIFACE.

I hear

Your will with joy. It is a deadly peril  
 To France that she is governed by a man  
 No better than an image, golden-haired  
 But lifeless as a stone. The very people  
 Laugh at the word, *a King*. But all will change  
 When Pepin's bulk of character extends  
 The meaning of his office.

CARLOMAN.

Pepin, King !

O Marcomir, you have heard it ?

MARCOMIR.

Yes, I heard . . .

No matter ! He has ruled so long, the title  
 Will fall on him as new years follow old.

ZACHARIAS.

[*to BONIFACE.*]

We bid you see he is proclaimed ; ourself  
 Have hope to crown him when occasion brings  
 Either the Frank to us or us to him.  
 Although he want our oil, we give him grace

To exercise all sovereignty, immuring  
 Chilperic within the cloister where he dwells.

CARLOMAN.

[*suddenly to ZACHARIAS.*]

Oh, you can act for God, and I must pray ;  
 There is a distance from Him in my life  
 Since I can only pray : while there is nearness  
 Between your life and His creative *Be* !

ZACHARIAS.

[*astonished*] My son, what do you mean ?

BONIFACE.

O Carloman !

CARLOMAN.

Pardon. I spoke aloud a scudding thought  
 That filled my head one moment. So divine  
 It is to act God's Counsel.

ZACHARIAS.

We can serve Him  
 Only if stable, for the life of life  
 Is calm as the untroubled sea and changeless.  
 Go, follow Damiani, dearest son !

BONIFACE

Peace be to you, beloved Carloman.  
 My prayers, though often offered on the earth  
 Of heathen lands, are yours at morn and night.  
 I never can forget you.

CARLOMAN.

Pepin, King !—

O Boniface, I think you said farewell.  
 You journey far and far ; you see strange faces,  
 And woods where idols live in solitude,  
 Hamlets and forges, feasts, the glare of arms,

And great unpeopled plains so full of wind  
It seems the owner, while the little trees  
And grass are slaves : and thus you wander on  
God's messenger . . . Ha, ha ! The little trees  
And grass ! . . . Good-bye !

BONIFACE.

My child—

CARLOMAN.

[*gently*]

Yes, Boniface ?

BONIFACE.

Nothing. I can but bless you. Go, *in peace*.

[*As CARLOMAN moves away, MARCOMIR bends forward.*]

MARCOMIR.

Is the Queen well ?

BONIFACE.

Ask not ; he has not asked.

## ACT III

SCENE : *The Garden and Cloisters of Monte Casino.*

MARCOMIR.

*[striking himself with a stone]*

What tides of rapture spring at every stroke !  
Have mercy, God ! Such agony of pleasure  
I felt when *she* came near. Oh, can it be  
I have not yet inflicted utter pain ?  
Is there some chaste and vigorous suffering  
Beyond the shameful wiles, with which the lash  
Unnerves me ? Pain, more pain !

*[He strikes himself without pity ; then, seeing DAMIANI enter the court, he hurriedly drops the shard.]*

DAMIANI.

Your hand is bleeding.

I see !—Although I took away your silex  
You yet have braved my will.

MARCOMIR.

I need the rod.

DAMIANI.

You need obedience. Flog yourself again,  
You will be locked in prison like your friend.

MARCOMIR.

*[in a low voice]*

He has no guilt.

DAMIANI.

No guilt ! You have not heard  
I caught him flushed with triumph at the news  
That Astolph in defiance of the Pope

Is laying siege to Rome. Good Rachis wept  
 As well he might, but Carloman blasphemed  
*Would I were with your brother !* and for this  
 I had him shut in darkness fourteen days.  
 The term is over, and to change your sullen,  
 Ascetic mood—it is a festival—  
 You shall restore your friend to liberty.  
 You err through over-discipline, a fault,  
 But one that brings us honour ; stubbornness  
 Like his disgraces the whole brotherhood.  
 Admonish him ! If he is quite subdued  
 He shall be suffered to resume his rank  
 Among his fellows : for yourself, remember  
 Humility is satisfied with penance  
 The Church inflicts. No private luxury !  
 Do not offend again.

[*Exit.*]

MARCOMIR.

Not use the rod !  
 Not use it when I feel incitements rapid  
 As points of fire awake me to the knowledge  
 That all my flesh is burning ! Every flint  
 Becomes a new temptation. How confess  
 To *him* I love his wife, and guiltily !  
 O Geneviva, do the swans still crowd  
 Round you to feed them ? Are you mistress still  
 In the old palace ? Can there be a doubt ?  
 If Pepin dare insult you—O this frock,  
 This girdle, not a sword belt ! And your husband  
 Who brought you to such peril with his dreams,  
 Let the light wake him !

[MARCOMIR *unlocks the prison-door, flings it open and  
 draws back behind the trellis of vines.*]

CARLOMAN.

What has struck my eyes ?  
 Is it the air, the sun, an open door ?  
 Oh, it is dark with brightness, and half-blinds,  
 So rushing in ! I would have been with God



When the light broke in answer to His cry ;  
I would have seen it pushing its broad leaves  
Through Chaos as it travelled !—

MARCOMIR.

[*advancing*] I am come  
To give you freedom.

CARLOMAN.

[*seizing his hand like a boy*]  
Are the throstles fledged  
I left within the orchard ?

MARCOMIR.

They are gone . . .  
Besides, we must not wander—recollect !

CARLOMAN.

I do ; I was a goatherd on those hills  
Before my punishment [*pointing to the prison*].  
How sad you look ! Come with me ; I will show you  
The flock of goats leaping from crag to crag—  
And have you ever drunk their milk ? It foams ;  
Its thousand little bubbles seem themselves  
Full of an airy life, and in the smack  
Of the warm draught something exhilarates  
And carries one along. Come to the hills !

MARCOMIR.

Dear Carloman—

CARLOMAN.

These cloisters are so dull  
Where you sit brooding morn and eve ; beyond  
One sees the clouds laying their restless fingers  
Across the scaurs.

MARCOMIR.

But is that meditation,  
And does one so find peace ?

CARLOMAN.

The dew is there  
In the green hollows ; when I see those steeped  
And shining fields, my heart fills to the brim,  
And, though I yearn, my yearning satisfies.  
Come with me : fast as I attain, with you  
I share the secret.

MARCOMIR.

But you strike me dumb.  
You have forgotten, we are bound by vows,  
By our obedience.

CARLOMAN.

Are we bound by hopes,  
By yesterday's lost hopes ?

MARCOMIR.

But promises—

CARLOMAN.

I promised to be God's, ah yes, I promised,  
As two on earth agree to be together  
For evermore, vowed lovers. Is the marriage  
In the companionship or in the vow ?  
Why, Geneviva is still vowed my wife.

MARCOMIR.

But we must keep our troth.

CARLOMAN.

We must escape  
From anything that is become a bond,  
No matter who has forged the chain,—ourselves,  
An enemy, a friend : and this escape,  
This readjustment is the penitence,  
The sole that I will practise.  
[*looking more narrowly at MARCOMIR*] But your eyes  
Are witheringly remorseful. One would say

That you had been some sunshines in the dark,  
You, and not I. Open your heart to me.

MARCOMIR.

I hate you.

CARLOMAN.

Hate me, why ? For heresy ?

MARCOMIR.

No, for your blindness : think what you have done,  
Think of . . . at least, think of your only child  
Mewed within convent walls.

CARLOMAN.

There is escape.

MARCOMIR.

What, for a child ?

CARLOMAN.

[*clenching his hand*] *Per Baccho*, but my son  
Shall never wear a tonsure.

MARCOMIR.

Time will prove !

You stand so free and noble in the light  
Yet it is you who brought me to despair.  
One cannot be a fool, one of God's fools,  
Unconscious of the ill in others' hearts,  
And not breed deadly mischief.

CARLOMAN.

I entreated

You would not come with me.

MARCOMIR.

You drew me on ;

You cannot help it, you make life so royal

Men follow you and think they will be Kings,  
And then ——

CARLOMAN.

What ails you ?

MARCOMIR.

Have you watched the lepers ?  
Waiting outside the churches to be blest ?—  
They pray, they linger, they receive their God,  
And yet depart uncleansed.

Do not continue  
To question me, but listen. Bend your eyes  
Full on me ! I have never told the Prior,  
I cannot ; and I would not breathe it now  
But for her sake. The lady Geneviva  
Is spotless ; but my thoughts have been defiled.  
I love her, I have never won her love,  
Must never strive to win it. It is hell  
To think of her.

CARLOMAN.

You never won her love ?

MARCOMIR.

Never.

CARLOMAN.

She had so many favourites,  
Poor boy ! and you were thwarted.

MARCOMIR.

But her bond,  
My deep disloyalty !

CARLOMAN.

No more of this—

MARCOMIR.

If I were in the world, it is to her  
I should return.

CARLOMAN.

The doors are strongly barred :  
There is no other hindrance.

MARCOMIR.

They are come  
The brethren and the prior : you must kneel  
And then be reinstated. I forgot.

[*Enter DAMIANI and a number of monks.*]

DAMIANI.

Brother, we have great joy in your release,  
And hasten to embrace you. Own your fault  
Submissively, then rise and take your place  
In our rejoicing band.

CARLOMAN.

I will not kneel.

DAMIANI.

Respect your vow.

CARLOMAN.

But there is no such thing—  
A vow ! as well respect the case that sheathes  
The chrysalis, when the live creature stirs !  
We make these fetters for ourselves, and then  
We grow and burst them. It is clear no man  
Can so forecast the changes of his course  
That he can promise *so I will remain,*  
*Such, and no other.* Words like these are straws  
The current plays with as it moves along.

DAMIANI.

My brethren, do not listen ; he is mad.

CARLOMAN.

No, you are mad ; you cannot see that Time  
Is God's own movement, all that He can do

Between the day a man is born and dies.  
 Listen a little : is there one of you  
 Who looks upon the sunlight and the buds  
 That moss the vines in March, and does not feel  
*Now I am living with these changeful things ;*  
*The instant is so golden for us all,*  
*And this is life ?* Think what the vines would be  
 If they were glued forever, and one month  
 Gave them a law—the richness that would cease,  
 The flower, the shade, the ripening. We are men,  
 With fourscore years for season, and we alter  
 So exquisitely often on our way  
 To harvest and the end. It must be so.

DAMIANI.

Is this what darkness and strict punishment  
 Have wrought in the corruption of your mind ?

CARLOMAN.

I lay as seeds lie in the prison-house,  
 Dying and living—living evermore,  
 Pushed by a spark of time to join the hours,  
 To go along with them.

A MONK.

But, brother, this  
 Is overwhelming.

MARCOMIR.

Sin, can that be dropped ?

CARLOMAN.

Never, there is no need. Life seizes all  
 Its own vile refuse, hurries it along  
 To something different ; religion makes  
 The master-change, turning our black to white ;  
 But so, as from earth's foulness, the stem drains  
 Corruption upward, and the cleanly flower  
 Waves like a flame at last.



MARCOMIR.

O Carloman,

My brother, I am saved !

*[The monks press round CARLOMAN tumultuously.]*

CARLOMAN.

But all of you

Be saved, and on the instant ! Yes, the prior,

You all of you, do not believe me mad.

It is your misery, I think, that more,

More than the urgent torment of my soul

Has brought me to the truth, the healing truth

That we must give our natures to the air,

To light and liberty, suppressing nothing,

Freeing each passion : we have slaves within,

So many slaves, and I have learnt that saints

Have dungeons that they dare not look into,

The horror is so deadly. Force the locks,

Let the fierce captives ravage. Better far

Murder and rapine in the city-streets,

Than lust and hatred's unfulfilled desires !

Be saved ; strike free into the world—come out !

Oh, you can do it—I have spoken truth,

I see that by your faces.

OLD MONK.

*[touching DAMIANI's shoulder]* Surely, prior,

We must arrest this traitor.

DAMIANI.

*[in a whisper]*

Half the brethren

Are in the chapel : I will bring them down

In mass on these insurgent novices.

*[aloud]* Children, I leave you : wrestle with temptation ;

I now can only aid you with my prayers.

When you have heard him through, decide ; and either

Lead him in chains to me ; or if his lies

Prevail with you, then put me in your prisons,

And let the devil rule.

[to CARLOMAN] Now do your worst  
With your blaspheming tongue.

[Exit.]

OLD MONK.

We should be fools  
To listen to him—it is mutiny ;  
And there are walled-up dungeons.

CARLOMAN.

No, the hills  
For all, if all are reckless ; it is just  
The one that fears who is the traitor-foe  
Imperilling brave men.

1st MONK.

But how break free ?

CARLOMAN.

How ? All of us march with a single mind  
Making a strong procession from the gates.

2nd MONK.

The Church has soldiers : whither could we go  
Unarmed and with an angry multitude . . .

1st MONK.

Whither ?

3rd MONK.

Besides we are not of one mind  
Now he stops preaching ; it was like a spell.

4th MONK.

The heretic !

OLD MONK.

Tush ! 'Tis the kind of frenzy  
That seizes every novice. Carloman,  
Will you not hear my voice ?

CARLOMAN.

No, good old monk,  
God's servants must not listen but to Him.  
You have grown comfortable as the years  
Rolled on,—no matter. What the novice suffers,  
What every novice suffers, speak of that.

OLD MONK.

I have forgotten it.

CARLOMAN.

You can forget  
What you have suffered ; then 'tis waste of time  
To listen to you. What we suffer once  
In youth—in childhood and our secret youth,  
We suffer to our grave.  
[*turning to another monk*] Have you forgotten ?

1ST MONK.

No, but the pain is numb, so long ago  
My parents spoilt my life to have their will ;  
I must endure the best they could conceive,  
And save their souls.

CARLOMAN.

If you should lose your own !  
A curse on parents ! The one truth that led me  
To seek the cloister was my certitude  
A man's existence lodges in himself  
And is not owned by kindred.

OLD MONK.

Gently, brother,  
You had your way, and made yourself a monk ;  
Now you are all for change—so is the world  
For bitter change.

1ST MONK.

My mistress has been married,  
And would but laugh at me.

OLD MONK.

Time works such wonders  
If we will give him time to work them in.

1ST MONK.

It is too late.

CARLOMAN.

A maxim for the dead.  
It never is too late for any seeing,  
For any recognition we are wrong.  
It is a man's despair, not his confession  
Proves him contemptible. *Too late*, you say,  
*Too late*—but there are countries where 'tis spring  
And harvest many times within the year.  
Besides, we must not tarry in a place  
The moments do not wash with dew ; we wither,  
Death has his secret will with us. Believe !  
Act on the instant.

OLD MONK.

The high gates are barred,  
And yonder is the Prior.

[DAMIANI, *with RACHIS and a large troop of monks, is seen coming from the Chapel.*]

CARLOMAN.

The gates are strong ;  
But you and I and all of us can pass  
Through them in simple triumph if we will—  
With one consent.

Why, they are opening now !  
How gloriously ! Armed riders !

[*Enter ASTOLPH with a band of Lombard soldiers.*]

MONKS.

Miracle !

A sign from God.

CARLOMAN.

Not one of you shall come.  
What, flocking to my side because a door  
Turns on its hinges—shame !

ASTOLPH.

Where's Carloman ?

DAMIANI.

[*advancing*]

Who asks ?

ASTOLPH.

The King of Lombardy.

Give place !

CARLOMAN.

My saviour !

ASTOLPH.

Are you Carloman the Frank ?  
I like you—yes, your face is eloquent.  
You do not keep your eyes upon the ground,  
Like this dear relative.

CARLOMAN.

[*staring fixedly at ASTOLPH*] You glitter so,  
You glitter like the golden Vines, your hair  
Is gold, your armour full of spokes and rays.

ASTOLPH.

And you are muffled in a sackcloth-bag ;  
The contrast strikes you.  
[*to DAMIANI*]

Lunatic ?

DAMIANI.

And worse—

A rebel, an apostate, noble prince,  
For whom I bring these manacles.

ASTOLPH.

And I

An extra horse ; for, lunatic or sane,  
I must have speech with——

[*turning to CARLOMAN with a laugh*]

Do you know your name ?

We who are kings and soldiers know it well,  
And Christendom remembers. Ah, I see !  
You are not happy, so they call you mad.

RACHIS.

Have you no word for me ? I am a King,  
A King discrowned—and more, you have my crown.  
Are you grown sick of it ?

ASTOLPH.

My dear old Rachis,

Do not look covetous ! I am not come  
To take you from your prayers.

RACHIS.

You think you triumph,

But when you roll your thirsty tongue in hell,  
And see me in the peace of Abraham's bosom,  
Watching your pain——

ASTOLPH.

To every dog his day !

[*with a shudder*]

Ah, then—meanwhile there is a blowing wind,  
And all the world to ravish . . . Carloman,  
We are the brothers now . . . [*to DAMIANI*] Yes, I and this

[*RACHIS sneaks off, hissing curses.*]

Fraternal soul, your madman.

DAMIANI.

Do you need

An interview ?



ASTOLPH.

I take it, thank you. Glance  
A moment at my soldiers—and retire.

[*They all withdraw.*]

Come to the well, where we can sit and talk,  
And I can have a draught.

[*He looses his helmet and dips it in the well. CARLOMAN  
puts both hands round it as soon as it is full of water.*]

CARLOMAN.

Wait ! [*drinking*] Cool and strong !  
That prison-stuff was stagnant. Sunshine's warmth,  
The cool of water, how they both refresh !  
[*looking up with a smile*]  
Now, brilliant one, your business ?

ASTOLPH.

Will you leave  
The Monastery ?

CARLOMAN.

At once.

ASTOLPH.

You have no terror ?  
You will not creep back, conscience in your nerves ?

CARLOMAN.

Let me but pass the door.

ASTOLPH.

[*laughing*]  
I left it open.

You see it swings.

CARLOMAN.

Then we start at once.

ASTOLPH.

[*checking him*]  
No, stay a little. Are you still the friend  
Of Zacharias ?

CARLOMAN.

He is great.

ASTOLPH.

No doubt—

And most sagacious, for he seeks your brother  
To win him with the bribe of sacred oil  
As vassal and ally against myself.  
I started here from Rome the hour I heard  
That Zacharias had crept out by night  
To travel northward and defeat my hopes.  
You must arrive before him ! I am come  
Sure, from report, that you will help my cause,  
You, who have been a ruler. I contend  
No supernatural power should have control  
Of lands and cities, troops and civil rights,  
Matters distinct from God, as from the world  
The service he requires. Life is so easy  
If we will keep it human—quarrel, murder,  
And then make friends : we have so short a time  
To sin together . . . but this hate deferred,  
These pestilential menaces !—

CARLOMAN.

The Pope

Shall never injure France !

ASTOLPH.

It lies with you

To break the threatened treaty. You have owned  
Power over Pepin ?

CARLOMAN.

Yes ; tho' tardily,

He followed all my counsels.

ASTOLPH.

Ride, and stop

This treaty. If you ride you will forestall

The Pontiff's slower march ; and I meantime  
Will press the siege of Rome . . . you must not mind  
The ache of stiffened muscles.

CARLOMAN.

Hills and plains  
And trees—the olives, cypresses and vines ;  
Then France with nuts and poplars ! But you keep me  
In one great palpitation.

ASTOLPH.

Zacharias,  
Besetting me from north and southward, crushes  
My strongest forces. What a splendid thing  
For the old man to travel in the heat  
So far to work my ruin !

CARLOMAN.

But the world  
Is for the young, my Astolph.

ASTOLPH.

Carloman,  
I love you. Why, I feel a lad, eighteen,  
When looking on you. Come, we two must kiss ;  
We may not burn together, flame in flame,  
Again—so we must kiss.

CARLOMAN.

My blessed one,  
Would I could cleave to you ! You give me freedom,  
A gift so rarely thought of.

ASTOLPH.

[*calling a monk*]  
Fetch the Prior,  
The brethren, now—this instant. We must start.

CARLOMAN.

Grant me beside the freedom for myself  
Salvation for another.

ASTOLPH.

What, a monk  
Still half of you ! Such trouble for men's souls—  
But have your wish. Once on the battlefield,  
Men will become your prey. This solid jaw  
Means grip you will not loose. O Carloman,  
If I can circumvent the Pope, and then  
Stretch him a bleeding quarry at my feet—

CARLOMAN.

What, Zacharias !  
But I plead for France ;  
Popes must not meddle with her.

ASTOLPH.

[*as the PRIOR and Monks re-enter*] I require  
The services of Carloman : another  
Whom he will choose attends him.

DAMIANI.

Impious wretch,  
You steal from God His servants !

[*ASTOLPH laughs and moves up the courtyard to summon his men : DAMIANI and RACHIS talk to each other ; the monks listen in a scared group.*]

CARLOMAN.

[*drawing MARCOMIR to the front*] Marcomir,  
Come from this graveyard.

MARCOMIR.

No, I must not come,  
I dare not ; she is yours.

CARLOMAN.

Is mine ? You wrong her—  
Not yours nor mine. Earth's wisdom will begin  
When all relationships are put away,

With their dull pack of duties, and we look  
Curious, benignant, with a great compassion  
Into each other's lives.

MARCOMIR.

It is not so  
I look ; I have a lust to gratify,  
A lust for very shame I loathe to mix  
With Geneviva's image.

CARLOMAN.

Faugh ! because  
You think that I possess her ! Cursèd bonds,  
Cursèd law that makes this riot in the heart !  
Come forth ; all will be gentle out of doors.  
Gird up your habit.

MARCOMIR.

She ?—

CARLOMAN.

Is but herself,  
O Marcomir, we tarry—and the leaves  
Are tossing through the air—

[ASTOLPH *throws his scarlet riding-cloak over CARLOMAN, who seizes MARCOMIR with an impetuous movement and draws him toward the horses that champ at the gate.*]

## ACT IV

SCENE : *The Hall of the Frankish Palace. Early morning ; the remains of a banquet on the table, drinking-cups, wine bottles, faded leaves.*

[*A SERVANT is wiping away the stains of wine from the floor.*]

SERVANT.

It is a cheerful thing to make all clean  
When one is brisk and cool : this early air  
Before the sun gets up is fit for men  
To breathe when they are working.

Spot on spot !

A stranger to the revel of last night  
Would take it there had been a massacre  
To daub the floor so thickly.

[*Enter another SERVANT.*]

2ND SERVANT.

What a strew

Of glass and muddy wine-drops ! Come up close  
And listen. There's a curious monk outside  
Who asks to see the King—almost a beggar,  
And yet a red embroidered riding-cloak  
Flaunts round his ragged sackcloth ; while his voice  
Has such a wanton ring we need not trouble  
Lest he should take the scandal of this room  
Too much to heart. The jolly soul can pipe !

[*A voice is heard richly humming.*]

*Wine is for drinking,  
Glasses for chinking—  
Fellowship, pleasure,  
Of the full cup :  
Lift it up, lift it up !  
And let us be gay and be friends without measure.*



1ST SERVANT.

A monk indeed ! Why we must drink again !  
A minstrel !

2ND SERVANT.

And his comrade took the horses  
As he had been a squire.

1ST SERVANT.

Oh, but the song !  
I never heard another one like this.

2ND SERVANT.

Man, they are all the same : but then he sings it  
As if he had just learnt that grapes have juice,  
That makes it sound so well. You're pouring wine ?

1ST SERVANT.

Yes, he must drink for that. Ho, there again !  
Have you not caught the line ?

*[They join in as the voice sings]*

*These are the treasure*

*Of the full cup ;*

*Lift it up, lift it up !*

*And let us be gay and be friends without measure.*

Ha, ha !

2ND SERVANT.

Come in !

*[Enter CARLOMAN.]*

You praise deep drinking—you . . . .

For shame ! A churchman ! But . . .

How thin !

1ST SERVANT.

What eyes !

CARLOMAN.

Shall I have long to wait ? Is Pepin ill,  
Or is he grown luxurious ? I would say  
That I remember how your King is famed  
For industry. He does not lie abed ?

1ST SERVANT.

No, father.

CARLOMAN.

Call me brother if you will.  
Why do you choke with laughter? I am ready  
To laugh with you, to laugh to very tears  
At what I am and have been. Do not hide  
A thing so good and bright as laughter—Eh?

2ND SERVANT.

Mad! It were best to leave him to himself.

[*They draw back.*]

CARLOMAN.

[*Looking round the room*]

Throw the door wide open. Here we need  
Fresh air even more than water. How the wine  
Cries from the ground—shut in with walls, and cast  
Below men's feet, a slough where animals  
Might wallow, and so sour! Let in the breeze.  
Let in the dawn outside there!

1ST SERVANT.

[*propping the door*]

After all

He is abstemious and sad at sin.

Look how profoundly sad!

2ND SERVANT.

Such twins of temper  
Are frequent with the crazy. Now he drops  
His mantle, have you ever seen such limbs—  
A very scare-crow's!

1ST SERVANT.

But a kindly smile.

2ND SERVANT.

He touches things and lifts them up and down  
Just like an idiot. We must warn the King.

[*Exeunt.*]

CARLOMAN.

A feast, how nasty ! Dabbled vine-leaves, vessels  
 Broken to shivers, the inspiring juice  
 Black on the boards—a feast ! Can happiness  
 Leave refuse such as this ? It visits slaves,  
 And then its track is loathsome. Ah, the air  
 Has entered like a wedge, keen, reaching me  
 Through all the mustiness . . . and now I breathe !  
 The door is not enough, the windows too . . .

[*opening one*]

There ! How it enters !

[*turning toward another window*]

In this room I lived ;

It is not altered ? No, the fireplace, east ;  
 My chair in front, and hers . . . but they are crowned  
 At present ; and my name upon that bench.  
 It is more terrible than nightmare—this  
 Besieging of one's life by chairs and walls  
 And memories. Ah yes, the walls, the walls,  
 They do the mischief ; and this reek of age  
 From every corner sickens worse than stale  
 Imprisoned fumes of wine. More air !

[*He throws wide all the windows : then leans out of the last. While his back is turned, GENEVIVA staggers drowsily in, reels to the board, tries to drink, then flings herself against the throne sleeping.*]

O Earth,

How beautiful to think I travelled on  
 And on, yet rode against no wall, so freely  
 The outworks of your sky gave up their space.  
 My brain is tired with interest : what men do  
 Or speak enthrals me, I who often paced  
 This room as blind to anything alive  
 As if a child unborn.

[*Impulsively beginning to pace.*]

And yet, my God,  
 How great a Captain thou wilt have in me  
 If this bond-King, this Pepin can be freed ;

If I can do this thing, while Astolph batters  
The very gates of Rome.

[*pausing at sight of GENEVIVA.*]

But who is this  
Strange, beautiful, wild woman ?

Oh, how delicious  
Her arms, her bosom ! Through the sodden hair,  
Trailing the ground, what glitter, and how clean  
This naked shoulder lies against the floor.  
Why, this is Sleep itself !

[*He comes close.*]

O Geneviva,  
So you too have learnt freedom, and are grown  
How marvellous in beauty !—Marcomir !—

[*MARCOMIR stands at the door.*]

He must not see her drunken and so flushed ;  
He shall not.

[*moving quickly to the door*]

I am looking every moment  
For Pepin ; do not enter.

[*MARCOMIR turns and goes out.*]

Oh, my shame,  
If she should open her gray eyes on me,  
And find me frocked and tonsured . . . for the sun  
Strikes sheer across her face.

[*He bends over her ; she wakes, looks up, laughs in his face,  
and then speaks.*]

GENEVIVA.

So young a guardian !  
Most holy father, but I am not dead ;  
Do not bring rosemary, or sprinkle me  
With holy drops.  
[*rubbing her eyes*] They call this morning sleep  
A beauty sleep. You must not stare so hard.

CARLOMAN.

But do not laugh.

GENEVIVA.

I must ; you are a monk  
Shame-faced and awkward. [*rising*] Have you travelled far ?

CARLOMAN.

I came on embassy : the Lombard King . . .

GENEVIVA.

These kings and princes ! But whoever rules  
Young men must have their pleasure. You and I—  
Shall we not drink together ?

[*She pours wine into a goblet—he drinks*]

God, what thirst !

Now you must rest awhile.

CARLOMAN.

Who are you, lady ?

GENEVIVA.

So should a novice lisp. I am a woman.

CARLOMAN.

Glorious !

GENEVIVA.

And you ? [*she laughs.*]

CARLOMAN.

Oh, do not jest with me ;

You bring a devil to the paradise  
It is to gaze on you. I am escaped  
From convent-walls, the wrong, the bitterness !

GENEVIVA.

These monks are cruel, cruel, and I shudder  
At their embrace ; yet if I have a joy  
It is to bring their manhood back to them.  
Ha, ha ! To see them look the murderer's guilt



After a moment's pleasure in my arms.  
You shall not slip me.

CARLOMAN.

I have left the convent  
A novice, as you say. But who are you  
So terrible in pity that you touch  
My hand and draw me to you, though my habit  
And shaven hair insult you worse, more grossly  
Than the most wanton bearing you have met  
In any other man ? I am ashamed  
That you should see me thus.

GENEVIVA.

My dearest lovers  
Forsook me to be monks. You are as one  
That comes to bring me tidings of the dead,  
The holy dead who have no evil thoughts  
Or trouble from temptation.  
[*She laughs bitterly*] For their sakes  
You are beloved.

CARLOMAN.

Then put away all speech :  
When love draws on me put it by as scholars  
Their task when night falls thick upon the page.  
Bend over me and kiss me. Do not laugh—  
I love you.

GENEVIVA.

Did you ever love before ?

CARLOMAN.

*Never.*

GENEVIVA.

Then I must tell you who I am :  
A harlot . . . in my palace—Do not wince !  
[*she looks at him doubtfully*]



I had a husband counted me a temptress  
 And fled : I laugh now to remember it.  
 I loved once ; he I loved became a monk,  
 And therefore I make sport of holy men.  
 I would not scoff at you, not tempt you even.  
 You have deep, burning eyes.

CARLOMAN.

He was a monk ?  
 His name, who fled you ? Would you have your pleasure  
 With me, his name !

GENEVIVA.

[*to herself, shaking her head*]

*He* had oblivious eyes !

[*vindictively*]

My lover's name was Marcomir.

CARLOMAN.

The monk  
 Who journeys with me on this embassy  
 Is Marcomir. If you are amorous still  
 Of him . . .

GENEVIVA.

Not now—no more. I am afraid . . .  
 Who are you ? You are surely of my race,  
 Have known me in my youth. A flushing shame  
 Breaks on me—

CARLOMAN.

And to find you are beloved  
 Moves you ?

GENEVIVA.

Not that ! I hear it every day.  
 It is too stale a story. Could I love—

CARLOMAN.

[*Observing MARCOMIR passing and re-passing the windows*]  
 How dare he watch us ! But I recollect  
 You told me he had been your paramour.

GENEVIVA.

You come . . . he comes, I mean, from Mount Soracte—  
Then . . . yes, I will have speech with him.

CARLOMAN.

[*bitterly*]

Oh, gossip,

The convent's gossip. I can furnish that.  
If you desire him carnally, I yield ;  
But if . . .

GENEVIVA.

He knows so much of long ago.

CARLOMAN.

[*impulsively*]

Then he shall speak.

GENEVIVA.

Not now ; you must not call !

Not now ; for he remembers—

CARLOMAN.

Ay, the harlot

Was once a girl, the monk was once a man.  
If you would speak of life  
Before it was apprenticed to these trades—  
Of life and youth, virginity and love,  
My ear will be as ripe for your confession  
As his. We all remember ; but our wisdom  
Is to forget : our powers of penitence  
Must be enfranchised, sin itself set free,  
No clog or fetter on us !

GENEVIVA.

Carloman,

My husband !

CARLOMAN.

Your free lover. Oh, I burn,  
Burn toward your beauty ! How can you forgive  
The years I simply owned you !

GENEVIVA.

Am I sweet,

So sweet to you—these lips so many men  
 Have kissed, this body. . . . But you bid me speak  
 Of life and youth, virginity and love,  
 And by a miracle I can. We two  
 Can argue of such matters.

[*As MARCOMIR passes she calls*] Marcomir !

[*She restrains CARLOMAN and goes to the door.*]

No, I must summon him.

[*MARCOMIR enters.*]

Were we not happy,

Those days we sat together quite alone  
 Praising and talking of him ? We adored,  
 We each adored him, but we had no part  
 In that lone heart of his. Now all is changed  
 He loves me—

MARCOMIR.

Lady Geneviva !

GENEVIVA.

No—

The harlot, loves the harlot. You can tell me  
 So much of him. What, with him every day !—  
 All through the golden summer and no rain,  
 All through the autumn and its violence !  
 Did he fall sick of fever ?

MARCOMIR.

I have known

So little of the seasons. Day and night  
 I prayed that God would keep you chaste. No prayer  
 Of mine was ever answered.

CARLOMAN.

[*to MARCOMIR*]

Dare you pray

That this should be or that ? The only prayer  
 That is not futile in impiety

Is like a plunge beneath a river's flow  
 To feel the strength and pureness of the life  
 That courses through the world.

GENEVIVA.

Ah, yes, to bathe,

And then to rise up clean.

[to MARCOMIR]

The very moment

He spoke of youth, virginity and love

I prayed : I am alive. O Marcomir,

And there are other words of fellowship,

Of joy and youth-time. Let us hold him dear

Because he has delivered us ; together

Let us give thanks, give courage each to each

Unenvious ; let us talk of him once more,

Though with a difference—I will not use

Your comradeship profanely as I did,

To set you up against him in caprice,

Then leave you wild and empty. He has much

To pardon ; you have more.

MARCOMIR.

No, no !

CARLOMAN.

Ah, no—

Not pardon. Where's the need ? We mortal men

Are brought to riot, brought to abstinence

That we may grow on either ready soil

The mustard-seed of pleasure, that is filled

With wings and sunny leaves. As time goes by

We shall have true relations each with each,

And with clean hearts receive the usufruct

Of what is best, and growing better still

In every soul among us.

[*leading her up to MARCOMIR*]

Geneviva,

His kiss will free your penitence, and teach you

He never could regret the past, because

It made to-day.

MARCOMIR.

[*kissing her*] Now, and beyond, beyond  
Your friend—and lover.

I have prayed, like you,  
The difficult is possible as once.  
O life, O Geneviva, I were doomed  
Indeed, if I should dare to rob myself  
Of all the joy it is to be with you ;  
That were to die forever. What, reject  
The gift you have for me, because for him  
You have a different gift ! But take my passion,  
As I shall learn to take your friendship—each  
Accepting what the other has to give,  
All will be well between us.

[*Enter PEPIN.*]

PEPIN.

Holy brothers,  
At last I join you. Come, this is unseemly . . .  
A pleasant dame—but not within my palace  
Shall you be tempted to forsake your vows.  
[*to GENEVIVA.*]  
Go, get your lovers on the highway ; here  
You bring disgrace.  
[*to CARLOMAN in a low voice*] A courtesan.

CARLOMAN.

My wife.

PEPIN.

Thor ! are you crazy ?

CARLOMAN.

And I trusted you,  
I left her in your charge. Where is my child ?

PEPIN.

Dead in the cloister half a year ago . . .  
That was no fault of mine. As for your wife—

CARLOMAN.

[*to MARCOMIR*] Take Lady Geneviva to her rooms,



Her rooms within the palace.

[*to GENEVIVA, as she goes from him*] So our boy  
Is dead ! Can you forgive me ?

[*He shudders and bows his head. Exeunt MARCOMIR and GENEVIVA.*]

PEPIN.

On my oath,  
I could not be her keeper, Carloman.

CARLOMAN.

No, that is no man's office. Of herself  
She was what she has been, and each of us  
Should say no word against her to our shame,  
Nor any word to one another more  
Than what we just have said. These fearful things  
Should be within a fosse below all speech ;  
While we live sound above them and forget.  
I come to you. . . .

PEPIN.

The same, magnanimous,  
My brother, as of old.  
[*laying his hand on CARLOMAN's shoulder*]

What bones !

CARLOMAN.

Ah, yes.  
I have not flesh as full of life as yours ;  
Why, your mere touch can warm one like the sun.

PEPIN.

Six years ago ! You come as if the dead  
Could rise and make a visit.

CARLOMAN.

[*gasping*] Pepin, hush !  
I have been dead, and yet I am no ghost ;  
You strike me through with anguish.



PEPIN.

But you suffer  
Unnecessary pain. I give you welcome  
With all my heart ; yet you yourself must know  
Your presence in the place where once you ruled  
Is—well, unlooked for.

CARLOMAN.

[*vehemently*] Brother, I can prove  
I am no spectre, outcast from the fortunes  
Of breathing men,—that I too have a part  
Once more in worldly business. I am come. . . .

PEPIN.

[*close to him*]

What are you come for ?

CARLOMAN.

I am come to live,  
To share again your counsels.

PEPIN.

You are come  
For *what* ?

CARLOMAN.

Once more to think of France, and act  
As you and I determine.

PEPIN.

Willingly  
I hear advice ; but now the throne is mine  
Decision rests with me and not with you,  
Who have been shut away from everything  
But prayers and convent-policy. Forgive,  
We are no longer equals—you a Saint,  
I a mere statesman. But you have not said  
One word about the cloister.

CARLOMAN.

Do we waste  
Much talk on vaults, we men who are alive ?

PEPIN.

And yet you chose it !

CARLOMAN.

Now I choose again.

PEPIN.

You cannot. Are you mad ? Who sent you here ?

CARLOMAN.

Astolph the Lombard.

PEPIN.

Humph ! What prelate gave  
Authority to him ? He could not use  
Your services by force.

CARLOMAN.

I left the convent  
At his request alone, in opposition  
To bishop Damiani. I am free !  
I proved it, acting freely.

PEPIN.

Whew !—this Astolph . . . ?

CARLOMAN.

Would save you from alliance with the Pope,  
Alliance with a foreign tyranny,  
Opposed to human life and thwarting it.  
Astolph is on your borders, and a King  
Is more your natural fellow than this Pope,  
Who seizes on the natural power of Kings,  
Confusing his tiara with their crowns.

I speak the truth, for Zacharias travels  
In haste to put his yoke on France and you.  
Before he can arrive . . .

PEPIN.

The Pope is here.

CARLOMAN.

Impossible !

PEPIN.

He reached us yesterday.

CARLOMAN.

Pepin, you are in league with him ?

PEPIN.

I am.

CARLOMAN.

As you are wise and manly, break your promise ;  
It injures France, the freedom-loving plains,  
The aweless stock we come of. Will you give  
The future of your people to a priest,  
You who profess the tonsure round my head  
Disables for a crown ?

PEPIN.

I, break my treaty,  
And ruin my whole scheme !

CARLOMAN.

The Pope is gray,  
And Astolph young and sound in force as you.  
Which is the deadlier foe ?

PEPIN.

The Pope and I  
Are age and youth together. Carloman,  
I love you still ; you take me at the heart

Now that your face is glowing : I must speak,  
 For either you are mad, or have forgotten  
 How deeds are judged here in the actual world.  
 You are a monk, a runaway, and worse—  
 A heretic blasphemer, one who tempts  
 Both to rebellion and to perjury,  
 Yourself as disobedient as forsworn.  
 You must go back and bear your punishment  
 Without the least delay ; for you are lost  
 If Zacharias find you here.

CARLOMAN.

Go back !

Go back !

PEPIN.

You are a danger to yourself  
 Remaining, and a danger to my throne.  
 All I have said is true. Have you not broken  
 Your vow ?

CARLOMAN.

I have.

PEPIN.

And are you not a rebel ?

CARLOMAN.

I am, I am, because I am alive—  
 And not a slave who sleeps through Time, unable  
 To share its agitation. What, go back !  
 You might as well dismiss me to the womb  
 From which I was delivered.

PEPIN.

Of yourself

You left the world.

CARLOMAN.

[*trembling*]

O Pepin, the same mother,

Gave us our lives, and we had worked and thought  
And breathed in common till I went away—

PEPIN.

We cannot any more. Why will you fix  
A look so obstinate and hot ?  
By heaven, you are a fool. I cannot change  
Myself, nor you, nor what has come to pass  
I soon shall hate you, wish that you were dead.

CARLOMAN.

How horrible ! I never will go back ;  
But I can live without my brother's love,  
For ties are not existence.

PEPIN.

Will you raise  
Divisions in my kingdom ?

CARLOMAN.

I must live.

[Enter POPE ZACHARIAS, BONIFACE and a number of  
Churchmen and nobles.]

PEPIN.

[to ZACHARIAS.]

There stands my brother and your enemy.

ZACHARIAS.

Who ?—Carloman ? You wrong him. But what mission  
Has brought him to the palace ?

PEPIN.

He has left  
His convent, and is here to plead the cause  
Of Astolph, the arch-heretic.

ZACHARIAS.

My son,  
Defend yourself.

CARLOMAN.

[*putting his hands over his brow as if in confusion*]

But I can never say  
 What he could comprehend. How strange to feel  
 So slow, as if I walked without the light,  
 Deep in a valley.  
 [BONIFACE *touches him*] Ah !

BONIFACE.

You do not listen !  
 Beloved, the Pope is speaking.

CARLOMAN.

[*to BONIFACE*] But you know  
 What drove you forth to wander foreign lands,  
 With joy in every limb and faculty :  
*That* drove me from the convent.

BONIFACE.

As a monk  
 I left the English cloister, with a blessing  
 From him who ruled me. Is it as a monk,  
 Oh, is it—that we see you in our midst ?

CARLOMAN.

No, no, enfranchised !  
 [*suddenly standing forth*] Hear me ! The *I am*  
 Has sent me to you and has given me power  
 To rend your idols, for you have not known  
 The God I worship. He is just *to-day*—  
 Not dreaming of the future,—in itself,  
 Breath after breath divine ! Oh, He becomes !  
 He cannot be of yesterday, for youth  
 Could not then walk beside Him, and the young  
 Must walk with God : and He is most alive  
 Wherever life is of each living thing.  
 To-morrow and to-morrow—those to-days  
 Of unborn generations ; the *I am*  
 To none of them a memory or a hope,



To each the thirst, the wine-cup and the wine,  
The craving, the satiety—my God !  
O Holy Father, you who sway the world  
Through Him, must not deny Him.

ZACHARIAS.

I deny !

God does not alter ; you have changed to Him  
Who is Eternal.

CARLOMAN.

Yes, in change, and free  
As we are free who move within His life,  
And shape ourselves by what is moulding Earth  
And men and ages. In my cell I lost  
The motion of His presence. I was dead.

ZACHARIAS.

No, you are dead to what you dare blaspheme,  
To what the cloister holds, if any place  
Can hold it, the immutability  
Of God's inherent nature, while without  
His words are trying men by chance and change  
And manifold desires. You left His works  
Behind, you chose Himself : your oath was taken  
To His deep heart ; and now you would forswear  
That oath, you cannot. No one who blasphemes  
The light of God shall see the light of day :  
For him the darkness and for him the grave.  
I am no more your father, but your judge,  
Who represents the God you have disowned,  
Insulted and forgotten. He requites—  
And you shall answer to the uttermost.

CARLOMAN.

I can.

ZACHARIAS.

You still persist in carnal thoughts,  
Confounding Deity with things that pass ?

CARLOMAN.

God is the Movement, if He is the Life  
Of all—I live in Him.

ZACHARIAS.

You left the convent  
Against command ?

CARLOMAN.

Against command of men.

ZACHARIAS.

And leagued with Astolph ?

CARLOMAN.

In fast brotherhood.

ZACHARIAS.

You hear his full confession. O apostate  
In vain, weep at your sentence.

PEPIN.

Holy Father,  
I pray you send him back, but spare his life—  
Spare him, if I have power with you.

ZACHARIAS.

His doom  
Is but his choice made permanent on earth.  
[to CARLOMAN] O fallen from blessedness of will, become  
The friend of heretics, the false of word  
To everlasting Truth, you are condemned  
Life-long to be a prisoner in your cell,  
Life-long to watch the scourge and crucifix.  
You chose them, as the God whom you abjure  
Chose them, *forever* ; you have lapsed and they  
Become tormentors, till they force contrition  
At last and save you.

CARLOMAN.

*[with a low, panting moan]* Prison !

ZACHARIAS.

At Vienne,

There till you die the prison you have made  
Of an eternal vow shall compass you.

CARLOMAN.

Think what it is—by God Himself, remember  
What you would do to me. The very dead  
Rise . . . Everything must have escape to live,  
And I shall still be living.

*[He throws both arms over his face, then suddenly removing them, makes a frenzied movement closer to the Pope.]*

Let me die

Here, now ! It is most impious, horrible  
To bury me, full to the lips with life.  
Sharpness-of-death, give *that*, but not to feel  
The prison walls close on an energy  
Beating its claim to worlds.

ZACHARIAS.

What I have spoken  
Is and remains irrevocable.

BONIFACE.

*[gently to CARLOMAN]* Yield,—  
Yield to a God Who compasses you round  
With love so strong it binds you.

CARLOMAN.

And is hell—

But I reject such love.

O Pepin, listen !

I see so far ! Your pact with Rome undoes  
Long centuries, and yields your country up

To spiritless restriction, and a future  
 Entombed alive, as mine will be, in night.  
 Simply renounce your promise, bid your soldiers  
 Seize the old man who numbs us. You and I  
 Could set to music that would never end  
 The forces of our people.

PEPIN.

You are crazy  
 Or worse, and I disown you.  
 [to ZACHARIAS] On his head  
 Let fall what curse you will.

ZACHARIAS.

Then he shall see  
 The sacred pact between us re-confirmed.  
 [to Monks]  
 Fetch Chilperic ! [Exeunt Monks.]  
 And meanwhile bring fetters in  
 To bind this renegade.

[*moving up to the royal board that crosses the hall at the further end*]

The treaty—sign !

[PEPIN and his nobles follow ZACHARIAS : Attendants bring in fetters. CARLOMAN submits mechanically to be bound, staring at PEPIN, who affixes his signature to the treaty.]

[BONIFACE goes round to CARLOMAN.]

BONIFACE.

Son, you do well to take your shame so meekly,  
 And bear in patience.

CARLOMAN.

[*sharply*] Have they bound me then ?  
 Look, Boniface ! And Pepin is a slave.

Nothing remains now in the world. That treaty,  
That pact !

[CHILPERIC is taken before ZACHARIAS and PEPIN ; they appear to address him, to consult with each other : then a monk advances and cuts off CHILPERIC'S long hair, while he weeps bitterly. GENEVIVA and MARCOMIR re-enter hurriedly as if they had heard bad news and see CARLOMAN bound.]

GENEVIVA.

Be true to him.

MARCOMIR.

I will.

GENEVIVA.

Then share

His prison—say you left his monastery,  
Step forth and save him from his loneliness,  
My Marcomir, his friend. This is the moment ;  
And, as you love him, speak.

MARCOMIR.

[drawing his cowl closer] No ! Once before  
I went along with him : I went to hell.  
Renew that pain and foulness for his sake,  
Because I love him——?

GENEVIVA.

Then because I love,  
If nothing else will urge you—for my sake,  
Only for mine.

MARCOMIR.

And would you be a harlot  
Again, for him ?

GENEVIVA.

Hush, never !



MARCOMIR.

No, we two  
Should understand each other, for we dare not  
Become what we have been. For my own sake  
I will not leave the world.

GENEVIVA.

He watches us . . .  
O agony ! And he is turned away,  
And casts me off for ever. Go to him—  
I cannot ; for he sees me as I am,  
The glory dropt away.

[MARCOMIR *makes a forward movement*]

You shall not go !  
What do I say ? I should not have the strength,  
Not all alone. Stay with me ! It is plain  
What I must do to win him, and so hard—  
It smiles so in the stream. Oh, hush ! Look there !  
That is worse dying. How they pass before him,  
There, standing in his chains.

And Pepin looks  
And hurries on, but all *his* gaze is fixed  
On Chilperic's shorn head.

See, how they pass !  
Now Zacharias—

And he curses him :  
The earth is trembling.

CARLOMAN.

[*making a movement as if to curse ZACHARIAS*]

But I have no God  
To curse you with. I cannot do you harm.  
I have no God, no friend, no glowing hate :  
You all will pass before me in procession  
Day after day as shadows.

ZACHARIAS.

To his cell !



## ACT V

SCENE : *The Prison at Vienne.*

[CARLOMAN *lying on a plank bed.*]

CARLOMAN.

Though Time has played me false—it is not that :  
It is the fading colours in my soul,  
And all the brilliant darkness through that chink ;  
It is—

[*The door opens and a WARDER enters.*]

O Warder, put the food away ;  
But come and chat with me.

WARDER.

I have instructions  
I must not speak a word.

CARLOMAN.

Is that the sentence ?  
Sit down.

WARDER.

But I must see you drink this wine.  
The Pope, King Pepin too—they all are anxious  
Your life should be preserved.

CARLOMAN.

Sit down and drink.  
Now you will chat with me !

WARDER.

[*drinking, and speaking always in an undertone*]

How do you feel ?  
Here's to your health.

CARLOMAN.

Why, that is like a prayer—  
 Warmed by your voice. They who would shut men up,  
 And bar them from their fellows' kindly voices,  
 God cripple every motion of their soul !  
 So I am here for ever.

Take that bread :  
 I like to see you eat. Now talk again.

WARDER.

But you will eat some too ?

CARLOMAN.

No, my good jailer,  
 You shall not forge that chain. You know I'm dying ;  
 Bring me my food and eat it here and talk,  
 Then you will stay a little longer. Tell me,  
 How is it with the sky to-day, the winds  
 And the flowers crying after them ? O God !

*[He buries his face in his hand.]*

WARDER.

Sir, it's a south wind.

CARLOMAN.

Do the birds fly high ?  
 I watched them in great circles as I travelled—

WARDER.

I have not noticed them.

CARLOMAN.

In wheeling flocks  
 They mounted . . .  
 Have you nothing more to say ?  
 It must be early morning in the world  
 Where all is changing.

WARDER.

Ah, you'd know the time ;  
Most prisoners get confused.

CARLOMAN.

No night nor day ;  
God promised them forever—morn and eve,  
The gathering of the shadows, the decline,  
The darkness with no footfall : then the day  
And all things reappearing. That's for all—  
Most for the prisoners, if you'd have them gentle.  
Throw down this shutter !

WARDER.

[*shaking his head*] That is just the point—  
In prison you get thwarted every way ;  
You won't ask that to-morrow.

[*He rises, shakes the crumbs from his lap, sets the half-empty wine-bottle on a ledge within CARLOMAN'S reach and goes out.*]

CARLOMAN.

Is he gone ?

[*CARLOMAN drags himself up and props himself by the wall with his ear against it.*]

I hear the river rushing past the walls,  
Rushing and rushing, and through all my dreams  
I labour to keep pace with it : awake,  
I give myself to rest. It comforts me,  
To hear the bounding current pass along,  
To think of the far travel of the drops,  
Crisping the tiny waves. Away, away !  
It is great peace to follow : to pursue  
Is misery.

And if I kneel down here,  
I can just catch the glitter of the sun  
A-tumble down the stream. . . .

[*He crouches and looks through the chinks.*]

[*Enter ZACHARIAS and two MONKS.*]

ZACHARIAS.

Where is he ?

MONK.

There,

Peering between the loosened stones.

CARLOMAN.

[*turning*]

The Pope !

Leave me in peace. You promised me seclusion.

I told you I would be alone with God.

Leave me !

ZACHARIAS.

But you are shut up with the devil !

Deep as you lie, you dare not make pretence

That you have found your God.

CARLOMAN.

[*laughing nervously*]

The seeker lost

More than the thing to find. Leave me alone—

You break the thread, you break it !

O the stream,

It flows and flows, and there are waterfalls

Somewhere, great, heaving torrents . . .

ZACHARIAS.

[*bending over him*]

To Vienne

Pilate, they say, was banished—here to die.

CARLOMAN.

What, Pilate !

ZACHARIAS.

Do you tremble at the name ?

CARLOMAN.

O God, he saw the light and knew it not,

He had worse memories than Iscariot had

Misusing his great office. He had power,

Power to avert even Calvary . . . and yet

We owe salvation to him.

[*lifting himself up from the ground*] Can it be  
My blunder, my effacement shall prevail ?  
[*to ZACHARIAS*] So he was banished and came here to die—  
As you have banished me ; it is enough ;  
In chains and soon to die. There, hear them rattle ;  
Now you have done your part.

ZACHARIAS.

Not till you yield,  
Not till I see you suffer. [*aside*] Are hell's rings  
Of fire prepared in vain for him ?—Repent !

CARLOMAN.

Leave me !

ZACHARIAS.

No sinner has withstood me yet.  
You shall repent.

CARLOMAN.

But I am strong as you :  
I will not.

ZACHARIAS.

Oh, you must, for God's own sake,  
His Majesty—He cannot strive and fail ;  
His heart is set on you and He must have you,  
If but to bind in hell. Repent the past,  
Repent, repent !

CARLOMAN.

Not anything—the whole  
Strange journey and its perils that have brought me  
Here to the brink of Death : and all will come  
And touch that wonder, all will enter in,  
And rest and be revived. Why should one trouble ?  
Death comes to all, you cannot banish him,  
And Death has all we seek for !

ZACHARIAS.

These are words  
For men the Church has blessed : but if you die



Without the holy Sacraments, unshriven,  
 And unabsolved, you will be flung away  
 To yonder stream, shroudless and like a dog.  
 Thus heretics are judged.

CARLOMAN.

[*excitedly*] Be borne along,  
 Borne with the current. Is that possible ?  
 Borne *dead*—well, each man takes his full desert—  
 Mine . . . is it possible ? And further on  
 Past towns and cities . . . then at last the sea.

ZACHARIAS.

Vain hope ! You are God's prisoner. No escape,  
 No waves to hide you and no help of man ;  
 For prayer itself like hope is quenched before  
 The everlasting Prison-house. Farewell !

[*Exit with the MONKS.*]

CARLOMAN.

Ha ! ha ! He shuts the door—so blank a sound !  
 And now the river comes about my brain,  
 And now the music foams incessantly,  
 The music of my funeral. Enough  
 For me that I shall lie against the heart  
 Of that on-pouring volume . . .

I am left  
 By every creature I have breathed beside—  
 They do not want me. God—He least of all !  
 He has a King to crown.  
 All's well, all are provided for. . . . My brother  
 Is in my place ; my friend will take my wife.  
 How Geneviva shuddered at my chains  
 And clung to her old paramour ! So easy  
 The world's wounds are to heal. A little time,  
 Ten years, a year—and all is found defeat  
 In any life, all turned to ridicule.

[*Enter MARCOMIR in lay dress.*]



MARCOMIR.

I have great news for you.

CARLOMAN.

But I am dying !

And now if all the doors were open wide  
I should not move to pass through any one.  
You cannot bring great news ; I know it all,  
All that must come now : I can alter nothing.  
Rome will be succoured.

MARCOMIR.

Yes, the siege is raised,  
And Astolph in retreat. I am not come  
To talk of politics.

CARLOMAN.

Of private matters ?  
My Astolph, Lombardy ! . . .

MARCOMIR.

To say farewell,  
To bless you. I am here as from the King ;  
I showed the monks a parchment with the seal  
You used when you were ruler : it was found  
Among *her* jewels . . .

CARLOMAN.

Ah, I see, a gift.  
So you too play the King. My signet yours,  
Ay, and all else that ever bore my name.  
Keep it.

MARCOMIR.

But Carloman—

CARLOMAN.

I cannot wait  
To hear ; I have so very little time  
To speak in and such hatred ; hate that burns

My heart through to the core. You, all of you,  
So glad that I am sunk here ; Geneviva  
Moving no step to me ; and that great Pope,  
I gave my soul to in a wondering love,  
Vexed that he cannot tame me, not desiring  
My help, my pardon. You must hear it all—  
I am not in despair : I have a treasure,  
A burthen at my heart—where it belongs  
I do not know. I have tried many names,  
Tried God's . . . You see me dying, that may be ;  
But not till I have cast my burthen down  
Can I be certain of my journey's end.  
How very still your face is ! Are you dreaming,  
You look so happy ? And that scarlet cloak—  
Where is your habit ?

MARCOMIR.

I have cast it off  
Forever ; all my oaths are pushed aside,  
With all my penitence, by something holy,  
And the world seems new-born about me now ;  
I live as in a kind of bliss,—such joy,  
Such fresh, warm sorrow.

CARLOMAN.

Geneviva—yes  
I know she loves you. Wait till I am dead.

MARCOMIR.

O Carloman, I dare not break my news,  
Not yet, you are not worthy. Do you hear  
How the Rhone sings outside ?

CARLOMAN.

Beyond these shutters—  
The light, the lightning music !

MARCOMIR.

So life sweeps  
Down through my blood ; at last I have its secret.

CARLOMAN.

Go, dash yourself into the Rhone and die !  
 There is no secret hid in life—illusion,  
 That is the great discovery.

MARCOMIR.

O listen !

I am left poor and lonely in the world,  
 So poor, so lonely, not a soul that needs,  
 That ever can have need of me ! Unloved  
 And undesired, with just the sun to hail,  
 The spring to welcome till I die, no more.  
 And yet—

If they should thrust me in a prison-cell  
 I should sing on in rapture.

CARLOMAN.

*Undesired !*

She desires no one . . . but you dote on her,  
 And that will set you singing.

MARCOMIR.

On my lips

Already there is savour of rich song.  
 That is the joy I spoke of. Oh, to spread  
 The fame of my dead lady through the lands,  
 To sing of Geneviva !

CARLOMAN.

She is dead ?

Come closer. Chafe my hands—

MARCOMIR.

They mocked at her :

“ If the Monk-King should ask now for his wife,  
 And we presented him the prostitute,  
 Would he not feel the ribaldry ! ” She stood  
 Quite silent, and the ashen lines turned black  
 On cheek and forehead ; and they mocked her more :  
 “ The harlot and the monk ! ” Then suddenly

A young, wild, girlish glory crossed her face,  
 She grasped me by the hand—but how we went  
 Through the hot streets I know not.

On the bridge

She turned to me—" Tell Carloman his wife  
 Is dead"—and looking down, I saw her stretched  
 Across the buoyant waters : from my sight  
 Sucked under by the current 'neath the bridge,  
 She did not rise.

CARLOMAN.

[*triumphantly*] And Marcomir, they promise  
 To cast my body to the river there,  
 And let it sweep along.

MARCOMIR.

But I shall sing

Of life and youth, virginity and love.  
 You leave me in the world ; O Carloman,  
 You leave me here delivered.

CARLOMAN.

We shall meet ;

And yet such life wells up in me I fear  
 Lest I should not be dying. Geneviva !  
 [*turning to MARCOMIR*]  
 And you will sing to me ?  
 [*He lies back, wrapt in ecstasy.*]

MARCOMIR.

To you, to all.

A tax is laid upon my very heart  
 To sing the sweeping music of the Rhone,  
 That rushes through my ears, that chants of her,  
 Of all you have delivered. In its depths  
 You will be buried, but the very burthen  
 You die to utter, far away in France  
 Will be caught up ; Love will be free, and life  
 Free to make change as childhood.      Someone comes—  
 Hush, very softly, do not be afraid.  
 [*BONIFACE enters and steals up to CARLOMAN.*]

BONIFACE.

Beloved—

CARLOMAN.

[*putting his hand on the lips of BONIFACE*]

No more ! Dear voice, end with that word :

*Beloved* is not a prelude, it is all

A dying man can bear.

BONIFACE.

[*blessing him*] All that I go

To publish to the folk in heathen lands.

Tho' very often it means martyrdom

To listen to my story, I am blest

Proclaiming it.

CARLOMAN.

[*opening his eyes wide and raising himself*]

O Boniface, before

I saw you as an angel.

Is that wine

Still on the stony ledge ?

[*MARCOMIR brings the wine-bottle*]

Now let us drink,

Drink all of us.

[*to BONIFACE*] Go to your heathen lands

With that great lay of love.

This is a poet,

And he too has a burthen, but more sad—

Men love so fitfully. I for myself

Drink deep to life here in my prison-cell.

I had a song . . . O Marcomir, the words—

Why do you stumble ? Once again the cup !

*Fellowship, pleasure**These are the treasure—*

So I believe, so in the name of Time . . .

[*He sinks back and dies.*]

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